

Kentucky Teacher

September 2000

New commissioner's priorities include listening to you

Editor's Note: On Sept. 8, the Kentucky Board of Education selected Gene Wilhoit to be Kentucky's next commissioner of education. Wilhoit, now deputy commissioner of the Department of Education's Bureau of Learning Support Services, is expected to assume his new duties on Oct. 1. Traditionally, the education commissioner writes a commentary for each issue of Kentucky Teacher. To introduce the new commissioner to readers, we present his first commentary on Page 1, with a brief profile of his professional accomplishments.

As I write this first column as Kentucky Commissioner of Education, the news of my appointment is only a few days old. Actually, to meet deadlines for this issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, I'm writing these words before officially occupying the commissioner's office.

The Kentucky Board of Education, representing you and all people in the state, has given me an awesome, exciting challenge. I have been at the Department of Education for three years, working closely with the state board and department staff to help design our new testing system and to help teachers and students achieve our state goal of proficiency by the year 2014. I am even more excited today about Kentucky's long-term commitment to better education than I was the day I got here.

As educators and education advocates, we know that we have moved beyond reform to a solid, nationally respected system of public education. We know where we are going. The job now is to get there, and I am committed to working with you to do the job. We know about the many good things going on in Kentucky schools, but we also recognize some challenges and needs:

- Achievement gaps between majority and minority students must be closed.
- Dropout rates have got to be reduced.
- Literacy for all students must be a given in this state.
- Support for teachers and administrators has to be increased.
- Family and community involvement must become a hallmark of our schools.
- A statewide education data gathering system must be developed.
- Virtual learning opportunities and use of technology to enhance teaching and learning need to be expanded.

I am meeting with the board in to review these and other priorities. I also plan to meet with the Governor's Office and legislators as soon as meetings can be scheduled. Anyone who, like me, has worked in education at the national level knows how truly fortunate Kentucky is to have lawmakers who understand the profound economic and societal impact of education and who lead the way toward improved opportunities for life-long learning.

Also, between now and the end of the calendar year, I plan to embark on what I'll call the Commissioner's Listening Tour. I want to travel throughout the state for a series of public forums. I want to meet as many Kentuckians as possible — parents, teachers, students, school and district leadership, business and community leaders, representatives from education groups and the general public. Once the dates and locations are set and publicized through the media and through the communicators for your school districts, I hope you will make plans to meet with me at one of these forums. I want to know what you think

— what you are excited about and what you are concerned about. I also want to discuss our joint effort to reach the goal we've all set for ourselves: getting every student, every school, every district to proficiency by the year 2014.

These are exciting times, and nobody could be more enthusiastic than I am about how far we've come and how dedicated we are to achieving even more. Personally and professionally, this appointment is as good as it gets! I am eager to work with you on behalf of our children and the future of our state.

Address correspondence to the new commissioner at the Department of Education, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; address e-mail to gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us; phone his office at (502) 564-3141.



Gene Wilhoit

Meet Commissioner Wilhoit

Education: Bachelor's degree in history and economics, Georgetown College (Ky.); master's degree in teaching, political science and economics, Indiana University. Studies in educational administration, West Virginia College of Graduate Studies.

Affiliations: American Association of School Administrators; Council of Chief State School Officers; board of directors, Agency for Instructional Technology; former chairman, Education Commission of the States Advisory Commission.

Career Highlights:

- Social studies teacher at Northmont Junior High, Ohio; Mount Vernon High, Indiana; Bloomington High North, Indiana
- Adjunct professor of education, Indiana University
- Program director, Indiana Department of Public Instruction
- Special assistant, U.S. Department of Education
- Executive director, National Association of State Boards of Education (1986-93)
- Superintendent, Arkansas Department of Education (1993-97)
- Deputy commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education, Bureau of Learning Support Services (1997-2000)

Personal: Born in Tennessee, reared in Ohio; 57 years old; married to Rebecca Campbell Wilhoit; three adult children — Christopher, Kara, Jason; resident of Lawrenceburg in Anderson County

Commentary

Florida teacher longs for Kentucky's reforms

Editor's Note: Kimberly Swartz, a teacher in Florida, sent the following message by e-mail to the Kentucky Department of Education's Web master on June 23, 2000. She gave Kentucky Teacher permission to print it.

I went to Eastern Kentucky University for my certification, and I did my student teaching in Rockcastle County. Now I teach in Florida. I didn't know how good I had it in Kentucky until I had to deal with the ... education system here. My gifted kids here in Florida don't work on as high a level as my average students did in Kentucky. Everything from the state testing to classroom discipline was better in the Bluegrass! I have friends who taught in Kentucky who say the same thing.

I try to integrate as much as possible from my student teaching experience, including portfolios, rubrics and interdisciplinary work, but most of the other teachers here never heard of such things. Please tell anyone who complains about the Kentucky Education Reform Act to come down and visit for a while. They'll appreciate what they have at home! ...

Keep up the good work. It's nice to know at least one state has taken responsibility for its children.

Kimberly Swartz

Do you have a response to this commentary? Send it to Kentucky Teacher by e-mail at kyteach@kde.state.ky.us, by mail to 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; or by fax at (502) 564-6470.

Reminder!

Apply by Oct. 2 for Highly Skilled Educators Program

The application deadline to become a Kentucky Highly Skilled Educator is Oct. 2. Each year, highly skilled educators provide on-site assistance to low-performing schools. Each teacher and school administrator selected for the program will assist a school in strengthening curriculum, instruction and assessment practices and work with school staff toward exceeding school improvement goals.

Participants will receive extensive training through seminars one weekend per month from January through May 2001 and during the summer. They will be assigned to specific schools in July. Each highly skilled educator will receive 135 percent of current salary, up to \$90,000, adjusted for 12 months of employment.

For details and an application, go to the Kentucky Department of Education's Web page at www.kde.state.ky.us and look under "What's New" or contact Patricia Adams at (502) 564-2116; fax (502) 564-7820; e-mail padams@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

John Heeb is internal auditor

John E. Heeb, CPA, is by profession part sleuth, part fiscal wizard. For more than 20 years, he has been focused on making certain Kentucky taxpayers' money is being spent the way it should.

On Aug. 16, Heeb put his auditing and financial investigation skills to work for the Kentucky Department of Education as its internal auditor. The Kentucky Board of Education created the position last spring after a former deputy commissioner was charged with misappropriating education funds.

As internal auditor, Heeb will work with department staff to provide analyses, appraisals and recommendations that will help identify issues relating to internal financial controls. He will conduct internal audits and help staff review and evaluate internal financial controls.

"The challenge is to look at the structure of the department and its processes and see if there are more effective, economical ways to do things," Heeb said. "Whether it's sav-

ing money or generating a better work product or work process, it will mean a better education for Kentucky students."

Heeb comes to the department after serving nearly two years as Audit Branch manager for the Kentucky Department of Charitable Gaming. For 18 years he was an auditor with the Kentucky State Police's Drug Enforcement/Special Investigations unit, where he provided assistance in investigating complex financial crimes. Heeb became a licensed certified public accountant in 1981.

His wife, Judy, is a teacher at Eminence Independent School in Henry County. Their daughter, Tori, is an 8th-grader at Oldham County Middle School.

Heeb's office is on the first floor of the Capital Plaza Tower in Frankfort. To contact him, phone (502) 564-3141 or send e-mail through the KETS global list or to jheeb@kde.state.ky.us.



John Heeb

Talk to us!

Teachers: Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.



E-mail kyteach@kde.state.ky.us



Phone (502) 564-3421 or (800) 533-5372
(toll free in Kentucky)



Fax (502) 564-6470



Write Kentucky Teacher
1914 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

Simpsonville students take Olympic walk to Australia



By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

Students at Simpsonville Elementary are watching the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia, with a bit of déjà vu. In their own way, they've "been there, done that."

The destination for their schoolwide walking program last spring was Australia. Nearly 500 students at the Shelby County school walked a total of 8,000 miles — roughly the distance from Simpsonville to the southern hemisphere continent. Along the way, students learned about the "land down under," Olympic competitions and many of the nations that participate in Olympic events. Students even devised Olympic-style games for the school's field day.

Two years ago, recognizing that healthy students learn better, the school included in its consolidated plan a curriculum requirement for some type of schoolwide walking program. A goal was to help interest students in lifelong physical activity. The first year, students walked a total of 7,000 miles — the distance across America — using the gauge of 20 minutes of hard walking equals one mile. Students walked around the school campus during recess and class breaks.

While looking for a walking program destination for the 1999-2000 school year, teacher Maggie Nicholson learned through an e-mail listserv for physical education teachers that two 4th-grade classes in Manitoba, Canada, were looking for help in "walking" to Sydney, Australia, for the 2000 Summer Olympics. Nicholson volunteered students at Simpsonville to help one of the Canadian classes log miles toward their goal. (A 5th-grade class at St. Joseph's School in Graves County walked with the other class.)

The Australian "walkabout" fit perfectly with the school's emphasis on teaching the whole student, said Nicholson, a physical education teacher. Mathematics, social studies, art, music, science and language arts

ideas in classroom activities."

Fifth-grade social studies teacher Donna Harden had her students work in groups of two to four as they did research on Manitoba, Canada, or Sydney, Australia. Once they gathered

As a rite of passage, 4th- and 5th-graders at Simpsonville get to develop field day activities. Each student devises a game and writes a transactive piece about it. Eleven games are selected for field day, based on how well each student communicated his or her ideas about the game and the skills and concepts of movement needed to play it.

"The process really gives students ownership of the activities and their field day," said Nicholson, the physical education teacher. "Students want their games to be among those played on field day!"

The success of the students' walk across America interested officials at near-by Jewish Hospital Shelbyville. Nicholson worked with the hospital's exercise physiologist, Greg Brislin, to establish a Mileage Club at Simpsonville last year. The hospital provided small rewards to students as they met personal goals of walking five, 10 or more miles on the Australian walk. Three students each walked 70 miles before the end of the program.

"Walking to Australia and studying the Olympics were student-oriented, and much of it was student-designed," Nicholson added. "Anytime students initiate their studies, they really learn."

To find out more about Simpsonville's walking program and how it crosses content areas, contact Maggie Nicholson or Donna Harden at (502) 722-8855. Both receive e-mail through the KETS global list or at mnicholson@shelby.k12.ky.us or dharden@shelby.k12.ky.us.



Primary teacher Kathy Housley leads her students on a walkabout around Simpsonville Elementary to log miles during last year's Walk to Australia.

Photo by Rick McComb

teachers planned classroom activities around the Australian trek and the Olympics.

In keeping with Simpsonville Elementary's tradition of linking field day to the world games each Olympic year, each classroom selected a country to represent in field day events. During May, the students researched their countries and made flags for the field day parade of nations.

"That's what made it work," Nicholson said. "It wasn't just the PE teacher doing this. The regular classroom teachers collaborated with the PE teacher, and they incorporated their

information, they developed presentations, maps and games to teach primary students what they'd learned.

"By 5th grade, students are able to do research, give reports and share with the youngers what they are learning," Harden said. "My students were so sincere about teaching the primary students. You could tell by the questions they asked in their games — 'Who wants to be a Canadian?' and 'Who wants to go to the Olympics?' — that they had learned a lot."

In addition, Harden had students research Olympic sports on the Internet in preparation for field day.

No More 'Sit and Get'

Online courses offer PD teachers want, when they want it

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

Attention, teachers wishing for an alternative to daylong, "sit and get" professional development sessions: Your wish is about to be granted! During the past nine months, the Internet has brought on-demand professional development to teachers in several Kentucky counties. The service could be available to you soon.

Last spring, the Fayette County school district offered an online professional development program, "Engaging Students in Reading Through Use of the World Wide Web." During the summer, middle school teachers at several content academies supplemented their classroom studies with online sessions. All who participated now have access to a variety of online resources and the ability to collaborate with others from the academies, no matter where they teach in the state.

Teachers are receiving their online professional development via the Kentucky Virtual High School Web site. KVHS began last January as a statewide educational service delivering courses to Kentucky high school students. Simultaneously, KVHS administrators began looking at ways to bring online learning opportunities to other Kentuckians. Professional development for teachers was a natural area to explore.

"KVHS offers the ability to provide professional development outside the regular classroom day," said Cathy Brandt, a technology resource teacher who developed the online class for Fayette County teachers and serves as "guide" for the participants. "Teachers can access their lessons in the evening, on weekends, between loads of wash or after slipping supper in the oven. Teachers like the flexibility."

The power of online learning, Brandt explained, "is that it takes place over a period of time. You do a little, and then you can take what you learned into your classroom and try



Photo by Rick McComb

Bob Fortney, with Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS), shows Region 6 middle school science teachers Tracy Powell-McCoy (left), Laverne Lindquist and Phil Williams where to click on the computer screen. As participants in last summer's Region 6 Middle School Science Academy, they used the KVHS site and tools for part of their professional development.

it. If it works, you can share your experiences with your online colleagues and the guide. If it doesn't, you can share and get ideas for improvement."

Carrol Callebs, a teacher at Bryan Station Middle School, was in Brandt's online class. "These online courses are great for teachers because we can do the work when we have the time," she said. "This gives me time to learn and practice instead of being presented information and never being able to apply it immediately. ... This resource is so important, and the information can make teaching so easy."

Brandon Hargis is one of the teachers at the Region 6 science academy who participated in online instruction this summer. New to the classroom with only a half-year of teaching at Rockcastle County Middle, Hargis said the online tools would definitely benefit him and all other teachers in the academy class.

"The big thing about professional development," he said, "is getting ideas from other people who have different experiences and perspectives.

The KVHS tools make it easy. You don't have to call long distance or wait for the mail to arrive. You can get into discussions with individuals or groups of teachers in real time, just like they are sitting right across from you. It doesn't get much better than that."

Callebs agrees. "The threaded discussions have given me information that I might not have found otherwise," she said. "It also is helpful to see other comments from teachers. I also like having the instructor available for help."

Teachers participating in online professional development via KVHS will have access to these features:

Announcement Center — a message and information point for the whole class;

E-mail Class — participants can e-mail anyone in their course without leaving the online class site;

Online Chatroom — participants can communicate in real time with the instructor or others in the class;

Webliography — instructors and teachers can share and access Web sites that enhance course content.

This school year, the Kentucky Department of Education's Early Childhood Branch is developing online professional development modules that will be available to preschool and primary teachers statewide. KVHS plans a new initiative to engage teachers in creating online professional development for their colleagues. As a result, the Kentucky Virtual High School will open another component of its virtual campus — the Online Professional Development Course Catalog. Fayette County also will be offering several online courses.

For more information about professional development available this school year via KVHS, contact Bob Fortney at (502) 564-2020, ext. 203, or by e-mail at bfortney@kde.state.ky.us.

Meeting the Standard

Using the KVHS to access professional development helps teachers fulfill one of the 16 performance criteria in the technology standard for new and experienced teachers. Online professional development gives teachers the opportunity to demonstrate performance criteria 10.7: Uses computers and other technologies such as interactive instruction, audio/video conferencing and other distance learning applications to enhance professional productivity and support instruction.

New to the 'Net

A Course for Web Novices

Lesson 2:

What's on the Web, and how can I find it?

By Fran Salyers
Kentucky Department of Education

Welcome back to New to the 'Net, a series designed to take teachers from novice to proficient in using the Web for teaching and learning.

Lesson 1, published in the August issue of *Kentucky Teacher*, defined Internet terms, guided you onto the World Wide Web and previewed some Web resources for teachers. If you missed Lesson 1 and need a printed copy, phone (502) 564-3421 or send a request by e-mail to kyteach@kde.state.ky.us. If you already know Web access basics, go to www.kde.state.ky.us and click on Newt, the New to the 'Net mascot. You'll find a link to Lesson 1.

In This Lesson . . .

- Learn about the Web's depth and why you can't believe everything you see there.
- Get tips for evaluating Web sites for yourself.
- Discover how to find what you're looking for.
- Find out how to return to your favorite sites quickly and easily.

That's an ambitious agenda! Let's get started. First, go to the Kentucky Department of Education's Web home page (www.kde.state.ky.us) and click on Newt to get to the New to the 'Net page. (If you need a refresher on how to do this, consult Lesson 1.)

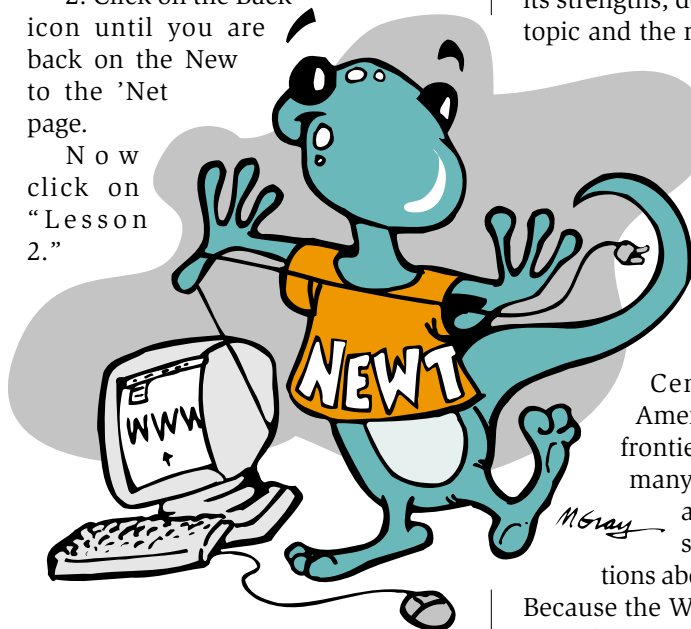
Bookmarking

Did you bookmark the New to the 'Net page during Lesson 1? If not, you may want to do so now. A bookmark puts a Web site's address into your personal list so you find it quickly in the future.

Click on "How to Bookmark" for a quick tutorial. Note: Bookmarks are called "Favorites" in the Explorer browser. When you finish the bookmarking tutorial, go back to the New to the 'Net page. You have two ways to get there quickly:

1. Choose New to the 'Net in your list of Bookmarks/Favorites, or
2. Click on the Back icon until you are back on the New to the 'Net page.

Now click on "Lesson 2."



Searching

The Web has millions of pages, and more are posted every day. How can you find the information you want?

The tool you need is an Internet search engine. A search engine helps you sort through the virtual haystack of Web sites to find that "needle" — that specific bit of information you need. Maybe you've heard of some popular search engines: Yahoo,

AltaVista, Excite, InfoSeek, AskJeeves. There are many more. Each one has its strengths, depending on the search topic and the researcher's skill.

From the Lesson 2 page, click on "How to Search" for a tutorial on search engines. Be sure to look for the "Insider's Tip." It's a keeper!

Evaluating Web Sites

The Web is the 21st Century equivalent of America's Old West: a new frontier of wide-open spaces; many people, organizations and businesses racing to stake claims; few restrictions about what they say or do.

Because the Web is unregulated territory, there are no guarantees of accuracy, no assurances that everyone who posts information is doing so with honorable intent.

How do you evaluate the accuracy or worth of a Web site? A first step is to check the site's "domain." Domains organize the Internet into sections based on the types of individuals or organizations posting the sites. Most sites fit into six domains (see chart), and more domains are on the horizon.

Some government-affiliated entities use state and country codes as their domains. For example, the Kentucky Department of Education's Web address is www.kde.state.ky.us. The same is true of many sites posted by K-12 schools and school districts throughout the nation. The address www.fleming.k12.ky.us leads to the Web site of Kentucky's Fleming County school district. To learn about schools in St. Paul, Minn., go to www.stpaul.k12.mn.us.

A site's domain name gives you clues about who is posting the information and why. Such information can be important to your evaluation of the information posted there. For details, click on "How to Evaluate Web Sites" on the Lesson 2 Web page.

Reflect

Click on the "Reflect" link on the Lesson 2 page and document your responses to the questions. This documentation could be useful to you if you are taking this online course for professional development credit.

Send comments and questions to your New to the 'Net mentor, Naomi Cornette, by e-mail at ncornett@kde.state.ky.us (or through the KETS global list) or by phone at (502) 564-7168 or (800) 533-5372.

Web Domains

Domain Name

What It Means

Example

.com

Commercial or company

www.classroomconnect.com

.edu

Education organization

www.uky.edu

.gov

Government

www.nasa.gov

.mil

Military

www.army.mil

.net

Network

www.thelearningsite.net

.org

Organization (nonprofit)

www.iste.org

Two programs get middle-schoolers 'used to the notion ...

GEARing UP in Rockcastle

By Sharon Crouch Farmer
Kentucky Department of Education

To most of us, to “gear up” means to get ready. Rockcastle County Middle School students are “gearing up” for college through a program named just that — GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs).

Working together, Rockcastle Middle School, Berea College, Forward in the Fifth and School-to-Work Local Labor Market Area 16 earned a \$1.9 million federal grant last year to help fund the program for five years.

“GEAR UP is our vehicle for introducing postsecondary education to our 6th- and 7th-graders,” said Andy Beichler, GEAR UP services coordinator for Berea College. “It begins their academic preparation for college, introduces them to campus life and college requirements, and demystifies the whole idea [of college].” Every student has the opportunity to participate.

School personnel helped design the grant, weaving GEAR UP components into programs already in place at the middle school. That involvement also introduced teachers to myriad resources and how to use them.

GEAR UP includes four components: students, parent involvement, professional development, and school and community relations.

Customized training

GEAR UP partner Forward in the Fifth, a private, nonprofit organization serving school systems in 39 eastern and southern Kentucky counties, conducted a needs assessment and met with teacher focus groups before professional development offerings were determined. “Our partners at Berea College made sure the training would equip teachers to prepare students for higher-level courses,” said Ginny Eager, executive director of Forward in the Fifth. “The teacher training also addresses parent/teacher relations, technology and mentoring.”

Planners worked GEAR UP activities into the middle school’s consolidated plan to make sure that the most important need — time — was met. “We redesigned class schedules to include 80 minutes of planning time for teaching teams each day,” said Principal John Hale. “The key to making this work was allowing flexibility. The teaching teams schedule what they

need for each class. The only times that are not flexible are lunch, breaks, and exploratory and physical education classes.”

Students reap rewards

An integral part of the GEAR UP partnership is mentoring, based on the model discussed in “Yes, You Can: A Guide to Establishing Mentoring Programs to Prepare Youth for College.” Mentors — community members and Berea College students — keep journals throughout the year to record meetings with the middle school students, indicate achievement and document best practices.

Career awareness and college preparation activities address the needs of the different grade levels. School-to-Work Local Labor Market Area 16 provides career exploration software, sponsors career fairs, supports a seven-week careers class and assists with job shadowing opportunities.

Summer exploration and enrichment activities provide opportunities for self-exploration and development and career and college exploration. The content changes each year.

Parents get involved

The GEAR UP partners expose parents to a stream of activities from the time their children enter middle school until they graduate from high school. Parents and students take group tours of college campuses.

Fewer than 6 percent of adults in Rockcastle County have a college degree. A series of 16 workshops and information sessions help parents from the first steps of planning for college when their children are 6th-graders to completing financial aid forms when their children are high school seniors.

Systemic change in school and community

“Just as we know that individual students do better in school when their



Photo by Rick McComb

Rockcastle County Middle School 8th-graders in the GEAR UP program prepare to catch items being tossed their way during a character-building exercise involving communication, focus and self-exploration. The activity was one of many enrichment activities for students in the program.

.. that college can be a reality for them'

parents are involved, we know that whole schools do better when the community is interested," said Eager.

School-to-Work Local Labor Market Area 16 developed a teacher intern program. For three days during the summer, teachers team up with businesses to see first-hand how academic content applies in the workplace.

Community mentors receive training in helping middle school students meet the challenges they face. Hasan Davis, chairman of the Kentucky Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee and nationally known for his work in youth advocacy, designed the training.

Last year 22 mentors worked with 130 students. Some mentors met with students one-on-one, and others worked with entire classrooms.

A college and career fair involves both community and educational institutions. Other special events, such as motivational speakers, get both community residents and parents into the school. "When we get them physically into the schools, they instantly become excited and involved," said Berea's Beichler.

"No school could accomplish something like this alone," said Eager. "The program demonstrates what can happen when strong partnerships are formed for the long term."

For more information, contact Andy Beichler, Berea College GEAR UP Services Coordinator, at (606) 985-3553 or andy_beichler@berea.edu. Contact Principal John Hale at Rockcastle County Middle School, (606) 256-2235 or jhale@rockcastle.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global e-mail list).

Raising Possibilities in Whitley

By Sharon Crouch Farmer
Kentucky Department of Education

Extended school services and tutoring programs in Kentucky public schools are integral to meeting the academic needs of at-risk students. Programs that encourage personal self-worth and individual growth and promote goal setting and continuing education are important as well.

One initiative that aims at meeting both academic and personal growth goals is the Knight Mentoring Program. This program, a partnership between Cumberland College and Whitley County Middle School, helps at-risk elementary students make the transition into middle school and on into high school by pairing them with college-student mentors. Funding for the program comes from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

"The Knight Mentoring Program works to overcome any or all at-risk behaviors," said Lans Lay, director of the family resource and youth services center at the middle school. Lay reports that program results indicate that mentor guidance decreases at-risk behaviors.

"That is not to suggest that all students do and will succeed," he said. "It simply means that most at-risk behaviors decrease to some extent."

The program pairs 20-25 college student volunteers with at-risk middle school students selected because of excessive absence, frequent disciplinary

action, functioning below ability level, and socioeconomic or other concerns.

The maximum number of middle school students involved is 30. "When you increase the number of pairs above this level, you begin to lose the ability to accurately track and maintain the program focus," Lay explained.

The college mentors and middle school students provide information about their own interests as they enter the program. This information becomes the basis for matching the partners. "We hand-pick who will work with whom," said Lay.

College mentors and their student partners meet in a variety of settings, such as athletic events or at the movies. There are also opportunities for group activities each semester. Without the program, "there are limited opportunities for social interaction between these two groups," Harp said. "We bring them together and also use that time to expose the middle school students to college life, encourage them to succeed in school and get them used to the notion that college can be a reality for them."

The Knight Mentoring program has been an "outstanding learning tool for everyone," Lay said. "College students polish leadership skills and learn the value of volunteering. Middle school students learn by the

example of their mentors and experience the value of education and of doing things for others."

Leaders of the program, established in 1994, are Lans Lay at the middle school, Debbie Harp, Cumberland College's director of counseling and career development, and Diana Warmoth, the college's coordinator of leadership studies. The program's guidelines were developed by a steering committee assembled in 1994 by Cumberland College President Jim Taylor and Whitley County Schools Superintendent Lonnie Anderson.

For more information, contact Lans Lay at Whitley County Middle School, (606) 549-7050 or llay@whitley.k12.ky.us (or via the KETS global e-mail list) or Debbie Harp at Cumberland College, (606) 539-4404 or dharp@cc.cumber.edu.

Playing with Poetry

Students learn to use common words to express thoughts and feelings in uncommon ways

By Lori Ann Sheroan

Teacher, Bourbon County Middle School

My class's journey to fanciful worlds began with a slim volume borrowed from the public library. Myra Cohn Livingston's book, "I am Writing a Poem About . . . : A Game of Poetry," invited my 6th-grade language arts students and me to participate in a game that involved word play, creativity and abstract thinking. In the process of play, Livingston's game encouraged an excitement for poetry that few of my students had ever experienced.

The rules of the game were simple: Students would write a poem each week for six weeks. Their poems had to include specific words, randomly drawn from a collection of nouns submitted by the class. We selected one word the first week, two words the second, and so forth. Students had four days to write their poems, and a panel of anonymous judges chose a winning poem each week. The writers of the winning poems received prizes.

After a pointed discussion about the importance of putting a little extra thought into the nouns submitted, we agreed as a class that we'd dispose of any nouns that simply wouldn't work for us. We also decided that making slight variations to the nouns (plurals or words formed by adding suffixes, for example) would be acceptable.

Students wrote their nouns on slips of scrap paper and dropped them in an empty flowerpot. I closed my eyes and drew one slip of paper. Our first word was "weed."

The only guideline was that students would include the word at least once, either in the poem or the poem's title. Before we began, I led a brief refresher lesson on free verse and rhyme scheme. Students could choose either style. By the end of the class period, most students were busily scribbling ideas. I sat down to join them. It was Monday, and poems were due Friday.

On Friday, I collected the students' work and read the poems. Though pleased with their efforts, I noticed

that most of the students chose a typical garden weed as the topic of their poems. Only a few succeeded at penning more abstract ideas. One of those was our first winner, 11-year-old Brittany, who wrote:

The Stars

As I gaze at the bright stars
One is different from all the rest
Brighter
Like a weed in a bright green meadow
Taller
And more proud

During the weekend, I pored over the remaining poems, eager to share the results with my students the following Monday. Before reading the winning poem, I read several honorable mentions, drawing attention to well-written lines, use of sensory detail, rhyming patterns and repetition. Because a few students submitted paragraphs, I also reminded them of the importance of using white space as they developed poetic forms.

I pointed out several poems that included abstract thought, and I explained to the students the gradual progression from concrete to abstract thinking. We also discussed the use of simile, metaphor and symbolism as vehicles for transporting students along the sliding scale toward deeper layers of meaning in their poetry. A line from 11-year-old Kristoffer's honorable-mention poem, "The Weed," provided an excellent example. For Kristoffer, the weed had become "a noticeably green sword trying to break free of the Earth's grasp."

Before the bell, each student dropped two nouns into our flowerpot. I closed my eyes and drew.

"Horses and box," I announced. "Poems are due Friday."

On Friday, I circled the room, collecting poems and reading as I walked. I was amazed at the level of creativity expressed by these 6th-graders. Every student had benefited from our discussions on both white space and abstract thinking. Katelyn's poem,

"What's Your Reason," claimed the prize. (See Page 9.)

At the beginning of the third week, scraps of paper scribbled with nouns littered almost every table. Students were whispering among themselves, conspiring to have favorite nouns dropped into the flowerpot. One student wrote the word "magic" on all three of his paper slips. The words drawn — mud, flower, star — were barely out of my mouth before students went to work. Valentine's Day was approaching, and several students tried their hands at love poems. Lynn's was especially poignant. She was our third-round winner.

During the course of the game, we began to notice that our nouns were transforming themselves into adjectives and verbs. Students wanted to know if that was okay. It was. For example, for round two, 12-year-old Brooklyn used "horses" and "box" this way:

Frogs

In my boxed-in little world
Wild horses run like the wind
Eagles soar their highest
And
Frogs leap as high as they please.

During round three, 11-year-old Adam, exercising poetic license, created a new word to complete his poem:

Galaxies

Galaxies are like a summer's
Rain in June
A mudfull of stars.

As the game continued, we discussed the power of juxtaposing seemingly unrelated words to create images. Some students claimed that the more words we added, the more inspired their poems became. They seemed to thrive on the challenge of incorporating words without forcing them to fit. We encouraged each other to break out of our comfort zones as writers. If we normally wrote rhymed verse, for example, we attempted at least one free verse poem during the course of the game.

As we approached the fifth and sixth rounds, we decided, as Livingston's students had done, to allow for some choice among selected words. We drew six words for round five. Through class consensus, we chose four of those words as "required words." Each student could choose which of the two remaining words to include. Some students challenged themselves by including all six words in the fifth round and all seven words in round six.

Results far exceeded my expectations. Eleven- and 12-year-olds produced poetry rich in imagery and detail. Their personal poetic voices began to emerge, and they delightedly recognized and welcomed this development. After we'd exhausted our prize fund and the game had come to an end, students voted to continue without prizes, save for my homemade bookmarks proclaiming each winner a "Poet Laureate."

Students decided to expand the game by submitting verbs, adjectives and adverbs in addition to the nouns to which we'd restricted ourselves in the first six rounds. Thus altered, the game went on. Sixth-graders continued to think abstract thoughts, conjuring metaphors and juxtaposing words to create images as they wrote.

After all, what is poetry if not a collaboration of words such as concrete, door, worm, elbow and sky? Daniel, age 12, put it this way:

Poetry is like a worm
It crawls along the writer's mind
Until it is just right
It slithers around
Through many different forms
Until the writer is happy

Editor's Note: Myra Cohn Livingston's book "I am Writing a Poem About . . . : A Game of Poetry" was published in 1997 by Margaret K. McElderry Books, New York.

Winning Poems from 'The Poetry Game'

Round Two

HORSES BOX

What's Your Reason?

By Katelyn Auvenshine, age 11

Sometimes we take what we have;
Which is less than we want;
For granted.
Many a culture are trapped;
Trapped in a box that encloses
them like worms;
Ready to be Fed to the Fish;
At the Fisher's call;
While we run Free;
Free like the horse in an unfenced
pasture;
Not boxed in like so many oth-
ers;
Now why again is your reason;
Your reason for wanting more?

Round Three

MUD FLOWER STAR

He Loves Me

By Lynn Morrison, age 11

I gaze at the stars
All the twinkling lights
Fill the sky

The warm fresh mud
Oozes between my toes
Feeling strange and new

Picking the petals off the flower
One by one,
He loves me, He loves me not

Whatever happens here is a mys-
tery
The flower is my destiny
The petals are my life

Round Four

ANT CREATURE
TURTLE
WORM STREAM

The Times

By Kristoffer Howard, age 11

The times were special
When Mom would empathize
When I had a bad day.
When I had strep throat
She put a lukewarm washcloth
On my forehead
She lulled me to sleep.

The times were special
When Dad would take me fishing
By the stream.
When we would catch a turtle
And take it home
Instead of the prize-winning bass.

The times were special
When Grandmother T. would talk
About God
And the creatures He made
When we would play cards
She would tell me
The tricks of the trade
Instead of the old way
Just beating me.

The times were special
When Papaw would tell me everything
On how to handle a baby lamb
From the start
So it would be the best
In the end.
When he would show me
How the ants work together
To live in peace.
The times were special
When the family would get together
To show love and compassion.

The times were special
When big brother
Would help me on homework
Or share a simple hug.

*All these times
Were the good ones
The special ones
And they still are!*



Photo by Rick McComb

Young poets Kristoffer Howard and Sheila Rutherford take part in a six-week "poetry game" in teacher Lori Ann Sheroan's language arts class at Bourbon County Middle School.

Round Five

SKY DOOR
CONCRETE
WORM ELBOW
BRUISE

The Wallflower

By Sheila Rutherford, age 12

Sitting alone,
Nervousness
Like water,
Flooding
Over me.

Thousands
Of feet,
On concrete
Floor,
Lights dim,
Disco ball twinkles,
Loud drums
Become silent.
The silence
Grows into
Soft music.

The room's sky
Turns black.
The ground
Is grey,
Except for
Thousands of
Dancing trees.

A door opens,
And a boy comes
In.

His face is hidden
By a shadow.
Takes my hands,
Mind goes blank.

I get up,
Trip on my long
Gown,
Falling, falling.

His same,
Powerful hands,
Reach down,
Helping me up.

Bruised elbow
Will help me
Remember this
Night.

Walking onto
Dance floor,

Squirming,
Like 2 worms
On a
Gray sidewalk
While the sun
Shines down,

We dance.

Round Six

CRACK RAINDROP TEARS
WATER
COLOR
BASKETBALL
BREEZE

The Little Things

By Kayla Gray, age 12

The raindrop crawls,
Like a frightened turtle
To the edge of the blade of grass.

The cracks in rough, dry hands
Moisten with tulip-pink lotion.
The echo in the bounce
Of the basketball,
And the color of eyes
Go unnoticed,
With so many other little things.

Where salty, harmless tears
End up after being wiped away
By soft, warm hands...
And where exactly the rainbow ends
Are wonderful visions in a
Small child's mind.

If only imaginations
Never faded away,
We'd all notice
The little things.

West Louisville Elementary makes ever

When students in this rural Daviess Co high scores on state core content tests, areas of the state came calling. The school declared a moratorium on visitors, just to ensure they had time to teach!

By Jim Parks
Kentucky Department of Education

Editor's Note: April 11, 2000, was the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Kentucky Education Reform Act. To mark the occasion, the Kentucky Department of Education published a comprehensive report, "Results Matter: A Decade of Difference in Kentucky's Public Schools." West Louisville Elementary is one of 12 schools profiled in that report. These 12 schools are examples of successes happening in many schools — and inspiration for schools still looking for the keys to future success.

There was a time when veteran teacher Sandra Keller thought of school assemblies as enjoyable breaks from the work of the classroom. Keller views them differently now. She's often concerned that assemblies take away from her teaching time in the classroom.

Reform and its accountability features have made time — and the effective use of it — a constant concern at Keller's school, West Louisville Elementary in Daviess County. In 1999, the school declared a moratorium on visitors from other schools specifically to preserve the maximum possible time for teaching. Requests for visits began pouring in after the school's scores on state tests began to soar, putting this farming community school in the company of suburban schools serving the children of mostly high-income professionals.

Its overall score of 87 included a 107 in reading, Keller's specialty.

Maintaining that kind of performance means that every minute must count.

West Louisville has improved its performance under reform by maintaining its traditional methods — "We still have an English book and teach the grammar," Keller said — while adding on and blending in elements of reform.

The school added routine use of open-response questions, writing portfolios and a strong general emphasis on writing. "When we read, we write,"

Keller said. The school continues to use basal readers and to teach phonics. A new accelerated reading program features a series of works of literature followed by regular tests that students take via computer, one of many increasing uses of technology in classrooms.

Everything is grounded in the state's "Core Content for Assessment," which Keller describes as "my bible." Science teacher Dawn Young keeps her core content document on her desk

and checks off the concepts and skills as she teaches them.

While teachers say they are doing more group work and more hands-on activities in their classrooms, discipline and homework remain a strong focus. Instead of using a "canned" commercial program, the faculty did its own research and developed its own approach to discipline. Homework is assigned on a regular basis, and students who have trouble getting it done at home are assigned to the after-school Extended School Services program.

In Daviess County, which is among the state's top half-dozen school districts based on elementary student scores, the local district office has provided strong support through professional development and districtwide committees focused on curriculum and instruction.

With a manufactured housing development expanding nearby, the school's once stable student population is growing and more diverse. That, too, is heightening concern about using all minutes and resources well.

Kentucky's test measures what students are learning. Said Keller: "Each of us feels personally responsible for our test scores."



Photo by Rick McComb

Technology coordinator Susan O'Bryan assists student Halie Medkiff at West Louisville Elementary, where a focus on core content has resulted in some of the state's highest test scores. Another student (top of page) adds her artistic touch to the school's mural based on the history of the world.

Character Education

Five schools demonstrate what it is, how it works, and how it benefits students and schools

By Faun S. Fishback
Kentucky Department of Education

The Kentucky Character Education Program is a collaborative project between the Kentucky Department of Education and the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative. The program is based on the assumptions that character education must be integrated into the curriculum, must be the intentional focus of the entire school, must be an integral part of the behavior of students and school staff toward others, and must address the specific needs of each school.

The stories on Pages 11-13 describe how five Kentucky schools are participating in the program. First, here is a glossary of character education terms:

Kentucky Character Education Program — a program that integrates character education into the curriculum and makes it an intentional, schoolwide focus.

Peace Education (Conflict Resolution) — the program component in which students select peer mediators who learn strategies to help other students deal with problems or conflicts.

Project BRAVO! (Resiliency) — the program component that trains teachers to use research-based methods and materials to help students succeed in the classroom through resiliency, cooperative learning and academic achievement.

Second Step Violence Prevention Program — a curriculum of pre-planned lessons for teaching empathy, problem solving and anger management to students in preschool through 8th grade.

Character Traits — 10 characteristics or behaviors (altruism, citizenship, courtesy, honesty, human worth, justice, knowledge, respect, responsibility and self-discipline) taught schoolwide within the context of the regular curriculum.

Danville Bate Middle: R-e-s-p-e-c-t

When faculty, parents and students sat down a couple of years ago to prepare Danville Bate Middle School's consolidated plan, they identified lack of respect as their Number One safe school issue, said Principal Chuck Stallard.

Bate Middle already had in place the two basic components of character education: a peer mediation program and a family and consumer science curriculum that exposed every student in the school to many social and behavior skills. They wanted a different approach to supplement what they were already doing.

By joining the Kentucky Character Education Program, the school made character education a schoolwide effort. Every teacher taught Second Step violence prevention lessons during a 16-week period and reinforced character education in content areas throughout the year. The result, Stallard said, is that students are better informed about being respectful and responsible.

However, Stallard cautioned, success in character education doesn't happen overnight. Art teacher Cathie Harris, a member of the school's character education advisory committee, said some changes are planned for the 2000-01 school year:

- **Redefining student groups** — Homeroom teachers taught Second Steps lessons. Because homeroom populations are determined alphabetically by students' last names, there often was not a good mix of students to encourage discussions.

- **Changing lesson times** — Last year, the school changed from a six-

period to a seven-period day, and homerooms reconvened at the end of the day for Second Step lessons. The late classes turned out to be less productive than they might have been earlier in the day.

- **Improving teacher comfort** — As the school enters the second year of the program, the committee will help teachers become more familiar with program materials.

Work in the family and consumer science classes continues to complement Second Step. About half of the curriculum at every level involves problem solving, said family and consumer science teacher Pat Royalty. "I tell the students, if you can't cook or sew, you'll live. But if you can't get along with other people, you'll live a pretty unhappy life," she said.

Peer mediators are selected in Royalty's classes. She and Cecile Napier, the school counselor, direct the peer mediation program. "Peer mediation works well with character education," Napier said. "We're seeing more referrals from teachers since we started character education. Students are learning more skills to solve their problems, but they still want to talk it out."

Principal Stallard pronounced the first year of the character education program a moderate success. Royalty, the family and consumer science teacher, said, "I haven't seen major changes, but we have to wonder what we would be like without the program."

For more information about the character education program at Bate Middle, contact Stallard, Napier, Harris or Royalty at (859) 238-1305. Their e-mail addresses are *cstallard@danville.k12.ky.us*; *cnapier@danville.k12.ky.us*; *charris@danville.k12.ky.us*; and *proyalty@danville.k12.ky.us*. All are listed on the KETS global list.

Bedford Elementary: Character Building

"We've got to do something!" was the battle cry among faculty members at Bedford Elementary about three years ago. Student attitudes and behaviors had changed a lot since the teachers were students themselves — most of them at Bedford Elementary or other Trimble County schools.

Without a guidance counselor on staff, teachers and Principal Sharon Rowlett tried to deal with angry, misbehaving students and their problems, but they knew they needed help.

They found that help in the Kentucky Character Education Program. Now, nearly three years later, there is the occasional disruptive student who spends time in Rowlett's office. Teachers still meet with parents when a student misbehaves. Generally, behavior is more under control.

"We realize the problem hasn't been solved," said Rowlett. "But we have a lot more strategies to help students than we did, and we are better able to teach students strategies they can use the rest of their lives."

Bedford Elementary uses both program components. "Peace Education teaches students to be nice to their fellow man," said Rowlett. "Project BRAVO! helps them do their best academically."

Peer mediation is part of the program's Peace Education component. At Bedford Elementary, 4th- and 5th-graders elect classmates to a tribunal of trained mediators that meets at least weekly to help resolve conflicts among the school's 418 students.

"Before, everyone was always arguing," said 5th-grader and peer mediator Latasha Sullivan. "Student behavior doesn't make school as disruptive now."

While peer mediation works for some problems, other situations are better referred to the principal or teachers for resolution. Adults handle

threats, out-of-control students and situations involving body contact.

Primary teacher Carolee Kunkel said Project BRAVO! helps students succeed in the classroom by teaching test-taking skills and writing, especially writing answers to open-response questions.

For more information about Bedford Elementary's character education program, contact Sharon Rowlett or Carolee Kunkel at (502) 255-3217 or by e-mail at srowlett@trimble.k12.ky.us and ckunkel@trimble.k12.ky.us. Both are on the KETS global list.



Photo by Rick McComb

Bedford Elementary peer mediators Kindoll Jones and Latasha Sullivan (facing camera) work with Allyson Johnson and Kayla Brown to solve a conflict.

Browning Springs Middle: Setting Expectations

At Browning Springs Middle School, parents of 6th-graders often call Principal Susan Weatherford early in the school year and asked incredulously, "My child said she didn't have homework because all she's doing is practicing how to behave in the lunchroom, at assemblies and on school trips. Is that right?"

Weatherford is quick to explain: With students coming from three Hopkins County feeder elementary schools, it's important that all students know teachers' expectations for behavior at Browning Springs Middle. Spending a day or two at the start of the school year pays big dividends in making good behavior part of the school climate the rest of the year.

Improving the school climate was part of what interested the Browning Springs faculty in the Kentucky Character Education Program. A peer mediation program had been in place for five years. The faculty was using multiple approaches to positive discipline. They had addressed behavior in public places and behavior in the classroom. Character education was the next logical step to helping Browning Springs students become self-sufficient, responsible individuals, Weatherford said.

Just one year into the program, Weatherford said, improvements at the school are evident. "We've seen referrals to the office decline," she explained. "We've had fewer students in detention and fewer suspensions."

Choir and art teacher Ruth Hardy and 8th-grade language arts/reading

teacher Janet Corum notice the change. Both see students taking ownership of their school, working well in cooperative groups and being more tuned-in to how their actions affect others.

Last school year, students focused on three of the character education

program's 10 character traits: respect, responsibility and self-discipline. Teachers found appropriate ways to reinforce those traits during homeroom discussions and as part of their content studies through selected readings and Project BRAVO! materials. Teachers modeled respectful, responsible behavior.

"We don't just teach and model the character traits," Hardy emphasized. "We live it here at Browning Springs."

"Students receive positive reinforcement in everything they do," Weatherford says. "Good behavior becomes part of their way of thinking. Students develop resiliency to handle themselves properly in other settings. We still have students who test the system, but we do have a calm school climate as a result of students having learned to be more responsible, more respectful and more self-disciplined."

For more information, contact Weatherford, Corum and Hardy at (270) 825-6006.



Photo by Rick McComb

Artist-in-residence Rex Robinson offers assistance to student Lindsay Wood during work on a Baroque-period mural at Browning Springs Middle School. The principal, Susan Weatherford, says the artistic process, not the product, links this activity to the school's character education program.



Elkhorn Elementary: Renewed Effort

Teachers at Elkhorn Elementary School in Franklin County began this school year with a renewed effort in the Kentucky Character Education Program. For the past couple of years, the school has not been able to implement the program fully because the faculty and staff lacked training in all components, said school counselor Rhonda Barmore. Other factors in the slow implementation were a search for a new principal and an influx of new teachers during the program's second year.

The program didn't stand still, but it isn't yet a schoolwide success. "In two years, we're seeing a difference in some students," Barmore said, "but there are some students we haven't reached at all."

This year, the district is offering teachers two professional development days for training in the Second Step curriculum and encouraging teachers to incorporate more program activities in their classrooms.

Barmore said in-school support from Kentucky Character Education Program staff has been helpful. "The peer mediation part and curriculum for peace education are very teacher friendly and counselor friendly," Barmore said. "If we can use the program consistently from kindergarten through fifth grade, I know it will be beneficial schoolwide."

Contact Barmore at (502) 695-6730 or by e-mail at rbarmore@franklin.k12.ky.us. Her e-mail address is on the KETS global list.

Mason Corinth: 'BRAVO!'

The writing portion of Project BRAVO! initially caught the interest of Mason Corinth Elementary teacher Gail McAdams during a professional development workshop about five years ago.

"Project BRAVO! was the academic answer to open-response questions," said McAdams, a 4th-grade teacher. "The songs, posters, steps to writing and vocabulary help children remember simple rules in their writing."

For two years, Mason Corinth teachers used Project BRAVO! with their students (primary- grade 6) to increase writing skills. "We've seen improvement in writing every year we've used the program," said 4th-grade teacher Jennifer Caldwell.

Three years ago, Mason Corinth was selected to participate in the Kentucky Character Education Program. Teachers received training in Second Step, a companion to Project BRAVO! that teaches social and behavior skills. They began using the program in their classrooms, and the school counselor began working in each classroom once each week to extend the character education focus.

Role playing is part of many Second Step lessons. "Putting students in a situation and having them make choices in the safe setting of the role play prepares them to face similar is-

sues in real life," said Caldwell. "I believe it drives home the point of the lessons."

The teachers' investment of time in professional development in program components is worthwhile, both Caldwell and McAdams said. "Students are better able to work out their own conflicts," said Caldwell. "This means that conflict resolution consumes less of my time, allowing more time for instruction. It's a case of a little extra time and work in the beginning going a long way throughout the school year."

Teachers noticed a change in student behavior the first year. "That's what is so great — to see immediate growth the first year," said McAdams.

While the teachers see students using character behavior strategies at school, they hope the program is giving them tools to use in other aspects of their lives. "Even when I go home, I use what I've learned with my own children," said McAdams. "And that's what we want the students to do: go home and share the skills they learn with their brothers and sisters and with their parents."

For more information, contact Caldwell, McAdams or Principal David Fordyce at (859) 824-9510 or by e-mail at jcaldwell@grant.k12.ky.us, gmacadams@grant.k12.ky.us or dfordyce@grant.k12.ky.us. All three are on the KETS global list.

Need more information?

This is the final year of a federal grant the state Department of Education funnels to schools participating in the Kentucky Character Education Program. Efforts are under way to find funding to continue and expand the program. Materials and videos under development will be available to any school after the grant ends.

For details about the Kentucky Character Education Program,

- contact Rhonda Bailey, Kentucky Department of Education, at (502) 564-3791 or rbailey@kde.state.ky.us (or via the KETS global list);
- contact Michael Franken, Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative, at (502) 647-3533, Ext. 217, or mfranken@ovec.coop.k12.ky.us (or via the KETS global list);
- visit the program's Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us/osis/resources/tp/ce/default.asp.

New partnership brings high-tech opportunities

Through a new network of technical academies, Kentucky high schools have a new opportunity to give students a jump-start into continuing education or top-paying jobs in technology.

Cisco Systems, a world leader in the production and distribution of computer network equipment, has joined the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, the Kentucky Department of Education and a host of education partners to establish Cisco Networking Academies. The academies offer training in computer network design, maintenance and troubleshooting.

The academies are designed to serve high school and college students. The four-semester program will be offered at 11 regional academies (see box) and, through them, at local academies in participating colleges, high schools and area technology centers throughout the state.

High school students will gain

skills in TCP/IP, Ethernet, routed and switched networks, and standard local area network technologies. Learning objectives are closely tied to national mathematics and science standards and work force competencies. Graduates may take a test to qualify for the Cisco Certified Network Associate certificate, which confirms a high level of technical skill and competence. The certificate has benefits whether program graduates enter the work force or continue their formal education.

Instructors at the regional academies will teach the Cisco curriculum and offer support to teachers at high schools that choose to offer the program, which is voluntary. More than 50 Kentucky high schools, area technology centers and colleges are participating; the goal is 100.

More information is available on the Internet at www.cisco.com/edu/academy or from Tony Nunn at (502) 246-3146 or tony.nunn@kctcs.net.

Cisco Networking Academies

Cisco's need for skilled workers to fill highly technical jobs has led the company to establish 3,695 regional Cisco Networking Academies in the U.S. and 64 countries. In Kentucky there are regional academies at these 11 sites:

Ashland Community College

Bell County High School

Elizabethtown Technical College

Hazard Community College

Henderson Community College

Jefferson Community College

Kentucky Advanced Technology Center

Laurel Technical College

Northern Kentucky Technical College

Paducah Community College

Central Kentucky Technical College

News from the Speed

Exhibition will feature works by leading African-American artist

The Speed Art Museum in Louisville invites educators and students to an exhibition of works by Jacob Lawrence, one of the foremost American painters of the 20th century. The exhibition, Jacob Lawrence: The Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman Series of 1938-40, will be on display Feb. 6 through April 22, 2001.

This exhibition has strong curriculum links in Kentucky's schools. The artist, Jacob Lawrence, is listed on high school humanities visual arts reference charts. The exhibition offers curriculum possibilities in arts and humanities, social studies and history.



Painting by Jacob Lawrence

Lawrence was an African-American artist who grew up in Harlem during the Depression. He began his career around 1935 in the atmosphere of the Harlem Renaissance. The exhibition at the Speed will feature two of his narrative series produced in the late 1930s: the Frederick Douglass Series and the Harriet Tubman Series. Sixty-three paintings document the struggles and achievements of the two renowned 19th-century abolitionists.

The exhibition is organized by the Hampton University Museum in Hampton, Va.

The Speed Art Museum is hosting two exhibition-related events for teachers:

- **Teacher Preview** — Feb. 15 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. ET; free of charge; information and tools to help teachers develop appropriate instruction related to the artist and the exhibition. Registration required; phone (502) 634-2734 by Feb. 7.

- **Teacher Reception** — March 8 from 3 to 8 p.m. ET; free of charge; special viewing in an "open house" event; artist demonstrations and live music of the late 1930s. Reservations recommended; phone (502) 634-2700.

To schedule a tour for student groups, phone (502) 634-2725 or send e-mail to tours@speedmuseum.org.

For more information about the exhibition, go to www.speedmuseum.org on the Internet or phone (502) 634-2700.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

Bulletin Board
By Lisa Y. Gross

Commission on Women introduces new resources

The Kentucky Commission on Women, in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education and KET, announces the release of two resources about Kentucky women.

- A new Web site at www.womeninkentucky.com provides information about the achievements of Kentucky women.

- A documentary, "Women of Kentucky: Our Legacy, Our Future," offers an overview of women's efforts to gain and maintain a voice in Kentucky's public affairs. Gov. Paul Patton and First Lady Judi Patton provided funds to send the video plus related materials to every Kentucky public school and community library.

CONTACT: Ann Ferrell, Kentucky Commission on Women, 614A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-6643

Alternate portfolio training set

Teachers, parents, administrators and others are invited to alternate portfolio development training sessions set for all regions of the state during September and October. The one-day training is voluntary, but all special education teachers who have students in assessment for accountability this year are encouraged to attend.

Participants must pre-register. For dates and locations, contact Tina Buster at tbuster@ihdi.uky.edu or (859) 257-8456.

KCTM 2000 Conference set for November

The Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics (KCTM) has set this year's conference for Nov. 11 at Lafayette High School in Lexington. The program will feature local, state and national speakers. Participants will have opportunities to examine new instructional materials with a look toward the mathematics materials adoption process that starts in 2002.

The KCTM annual awards banquet will be in Lexington on the evening of Nov. 10.

More information is available at the KCTM Web site at www.kctm.org.

Bar Association announces photo contest for students

The theme of this year's American Bar Association Images of Freedom Student Photography Competition is "Celebrate Your Freedom: Protecting the Best Interests of Our Children." Students age 12 to 18 are eligible to participate for prizes. Entries are due Feb. 15, 2001.

The ABA sponsors the competition in cooperation with the National Newspaper Foundation, the Newspaper Association of America Foundation and the Newspaper in Education programs of local newspapers throughout the United States. The sponsors will display winning photos nationwide in children's museums and on the Internet.

CONTACT: ABA Law Day Project, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314; (312) 988-5735; www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday or www.lawday.org

Actors Theatre offers discounts

Actors Theatre of Louisville offers two discounts for Kentucky students and school employees for the 2000-01 season.

The "After Class Pass Educators' Series" and the "Super Saver Student Series" will offer the Mainstage Subscription (seven plays) for \$56 and the Off-Broadway Subscription (four plays) for \$32. Valid verification of student or school employment status is required.

CONTACT: Actors Theatre box office, (502) 584-1205

Free bluegrass music workshop offered for teachers

A free workshop for elementary classroom, vocal and instrumental music teachers on "Teaching Core Content with Bluegrass Music" will be offered Oct. 21 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT at the Galt House in Louisville. The workshop will include presentations on the history of bluegrass music; interactive activities and lesson plans; rhythm instruments; vocal harmony structure and instrumentation; using bluegrass fiddle tunes in Suzuki violin instruction; and more. Certificates for professional development credit will be issued.

Participants must register in advance by phone or e-mail. Registration includes a free one-day pass to the International Bluegrass Music Association's weeklong trade show, award show and fan fest.

CONTACT: Nancy Cardwell, IBMA, (888) 438-4262 or (270) 684-9025; nancyc@ibma.org

Agency seeks nominations for math and science teacher recognition

The Kentucky Department of Education seeks nominations for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. This National Science Foundation program identifies outstanding K-12 science and mathematics teachers in each state to serve as leaders in the improvement of education.

Kentucky honors 12 teachers each year. Four of them will become National Presidential Award winners. The award includes a \$7,500 National Science Foundation grant to each winner's school plus a trip to Washington, D.C. for workshops and recognition events.

Submit nominations by Feb. 12, 2001, to Ann Bartosh at abartosh@kde.state.ky.us or Teresa Spurling at tspurlin@kde.state.ky.us. For details, send inquiries by e-mail or phone (502) 564-2106.

Kentucky Teacher

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New commissioner eager to listen.....	1
Students walk to Australia!.....	3
Online courses offer PD on demand.....	4
New to the 'Net Lesson 2: What's on the Web; how can I find it?.....	5
Middle-schoolers learn to think 'college'.....	6
Young poets use words in uncommon ways.....	8
This school makes every resource count.....	10
Five schools demonstrate benefits of character education.....	11
News and opportunities for teachers.....	2, 14, 15

Interim Commissioner of Education.....	Kevin Noland
Associate Commissioner.....	Hunt Helm for Communications
Director.....	Armando Arrastia Division of Public Information
Editor.....	Fran Salyers
Copy Writers.....	Sharon Crouch Farmer Faun S. Fishback Lisa York Gross
Photographer.....	Rick McComb
Graphics and Design.....	Susie Morrow, Manager Bill Davis Michael Gray

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News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

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Photo by Rick McComb

FIRST-DAY FAREWELL - Rachel Young waves good-bye to her parents on her first day of school at Peaks Mill Elementary in Franklin County. Rachel is one of approximately 630,000 students enrolled in Kentucky public schools this year.

As educators and education advocates, we have moved beyond reform to a solid, nationally respected system of public education. We know where we are going. The job now is to get there, and I am committed to working with you to do the job.

Gene Wilhoit, deputy commissioner for learning support services, on his goals as Kentucky's next commissioner of education. See Page 1.

Kentucky Department of Education

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